

# From the Will of the Mexican King



Lev Tolstoy

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Everything on earth has its limit, and the most powerful and joyful ones fall in their greatness and joy and turn into dust. The whole earth is just a big grave, and there is nothing on its surface that would not have disappeared in a tomb beneath the earth. Water, rivers and streams are guided by their intended purpose and will not return to its happy source. All rush forward, to bury themselves deep in the endless ocean. What was yesterday, is no longer now; and what there is now, won't be tomorrow. The cemetery is full of ashes of those who were once been inspired by life, who were kings, ruled over the nations, managed assemblies, led military troops, conquered new countries, demanded subordination to themselves, were inflated by their vanity, pompousness and power. But the glory has passed, as black smoke coming out of the volcano, and did not leave anything except a citation on the page of the chronicler. Great, wise, brave, wonderful, alas! - Where are they now? All of them are mixed with clay, and what befell them, will befall us; and will befall those who will follow us.

But have courage - you, and eminent superiors, and true friends, and faithful subordinates, - let's strive for the sky, where everything is forever and where there is no decay, no destruction. Darkness is the cradle for the Sun, and for stars to shine, they need the darkness of nights.

Nezahualcoyotl (About 1460 b.c.)

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